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SUBJECT: JORDAN: TERRORISM SUSPECTS THREATEN COURT  
OFFICIALS, PRAISE BIN LADIN, ZARQAWI

REF: A. AMMAN 2889

[B](#). AMMAN 2094

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SUMMARY

[1](#). (U) Several high-profile, emotionally-charged terrorism trials are continuing in Jordan's State Security Court. Azmi Jayusi, the reputed cell leader in a Zarqawi plot to bomb the Jordanian Prime Ministry, intelligence headquarters, and U.S. Embassy in Amman last year, threatened the judge and prosecutor with beheading; he was thrown out of the courtroom for disorderly conduct. Separately, Abed Shihadeh al-Tahawi, who allegedly led a group of 15 extremists in plotting against foreign and Jordanian targets last year, praised Bin Ladin and Zarqawi during a recent court appearance. The defendants in the case also retracted earlier confessions, alleging they were extracted under duress. The judge has given the attorney for Muammar Jaghbir, accused in the assassination of USAID official Laurence Foley, until early June to prepare his case. Meanwhile, three new terrorism cases entered the court system, including one involving extremists who allegedly planned attacks against tourists in the Red Sea port city of Aqaba and liquor stores in Amman. End Summary.

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JAYUSI THREATENS BEHEADINGS IN COURT

[2](#). (U) The highly charged and heavily guarded trial of 13 men accused of a Zarqawi-inspired plot to bomb the U.S. Embassy, the Jordanian General Intelligence Directorate (GID), and the Prime Ministry in Amman in April 2004, continued in May as their reputed cell leader -- Azmi Jayusi -- threatened court officials with beheading. Zarqawi and three others are being tried in absentia in the case (ref A). During a recent court appearance, Jayusi shouted from his cage in the courtroom: "I swear by God that we will cut your heads off and that of (prosecutor) Mahmoud Obeidat!" Jayusi then pitched his slipper at the tribunal, a sign of special scorn in Arab culture. As Judge Bqour ordered the court stenographer to register the slipper slinging, Jayusi attempted to throw his second piece of footwear. When his attorney, Samih Khreis, tried to calm him down, Jayusi shouted that his services were no longer needed. Despite Khreis' subsequent request to the judge to be removed from the case, the Judge ordered that he remain "to ensure justice for the defendants."

[3](#). (U) The theatrics did not stop there. In response to testimony by Momen Hadidi, head of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine, about the results of autopsies carried out on four alleged cell members who died in an Amman shoot-out with police in April 2004, defendant Ahmad Abdul Fatah screamed: "I swear by God that the blood of our dead brothers will not go in vain! They are in heaven and you will go to hell!" When Jayusi disrupted the session again by saying he wanted to list the reasons why he targeted the GID headquarters, the judge ordered the guards to escort Jayusi out of the courtroom, angering the rest of the defendants. Two others were later expelled from the courtroom for disruptive behavior.

[4](#). (U) Against this backdrop, the prosecution continued to call several witnesses, including GID explosives expert Major Ra'ed Abu Ruman, who told the court that he had examined and tested the chemical substances, detonators, fuses, and electrical cords seized by authorities and concluded that "using these explosives to spread deadly chemical substances is one of the methods applied by armies." In earlier court sessions, the security official who had arrested defendant Mohammad Salameh said that Salameh was carrying a Syrian passport into which Jayusi's picture had been photo-substituted, a cell phone, and 5,000 euros. The official testified that Salameh planned to deliver the items from Zarqawi to Jayusi. The prosecution also called a police captain who said he had examined weapons in the cell members' possession; two other officers who had participated in a raid of a warehouse testified that they had seized vehicles, chemicals and other equipment being used to fabricate the vehicle bombs. A GID officer told the court that he found training material on computers belonging to Jayusi, describing the manufacture of explosives and poisonous

substances, as well as "ways to use heavy weapons and other materials to destroy buildings, airports, railways and telephone and electricity institutions."

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TAHAWI PRAISES ZARQAWI, BIN LADIN IN COURT  
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15. (U) Separately, the cell leader of a group of 15 local extremists charged with plotting to attack foreigners in Jordan, a local journalist, and GID officials (ref A), voiced support for Zarqawi and Bin Ladin during a recent court appearance on May 24. Abed Shihadeh Tahawi declared that "although they accuse them of being terrorists, the heroes Osama Bin Ladin and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi will come back to the scene soon to set up an Islamic caliphate state." Tahawi and his followers hail from the northern Jordanian town of Irbid. Despite their takfiri leanings, Jordanian officials have not linked them to any formal terrorist group.

16. (U) In a previous court session, all 15 in custody (one is being tried in absentia) retracted their earlier confessions, claiming they were extracted under torture and duress. At their opening trial in January, they had refused to enter a plea (which the court interpreted as a "not guilty" plea) and refused to call witnesses on their behalf. The only exception was their request to call the prosecutor Mahmoud Obeidat to the stand, which was rejected by the court. The court adjourned until early June when it is scheduled to hear the defense's closing statements.

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SUSPECT IN FOLEY ASSASSINATION REAPPEARS IN COURT  
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17. (U) During a court session on May 24, the security court decided to postpone until June 6 the trial of Muammar Jaghbir, who is accused of plotting with Zarqawi the assassination of USAID official Laurence Foley. According to the charge sheet, Zarqawi gave Jaghbir \$44,000 to finance Foley's assassination. Jaghbir is also charged with involvement in the 2003 bombing of the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad (ref A). Judge Bqour said the court postponed the session to allow the defendant's court-appointed lawyer, Fathi Daradkeh, to review the two cases.

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MORE TORTURE ALLEGATIONS  
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18. (U) A defense witness in the ongoing case of four local extremists charged with planning subversive acts against the GID told the court that he saw evidence of torture on the bodies of the defendants (ref B). The witness, Miqdad al-Dabbas, was convicted in February of plotting with Zarqawi to attack Jordanian interests in Baghdad. The defendants had retracted their confessions in an earlier session claiming they were extracted under torture.

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ZARQAWI, TWO OTHERS INDICTED IN KARAMEH INCIDENT  
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19. (U) The State Security Court on June 1 indicted three men for plotting a suicide attack on tanker trucks crossing into Jordan from Iraq at the Karameh border crossing in December 2004. Zarqawi and Thirar Abu Odeh are being tried in absentia, while Saudi national Fahd Fuheiki, 24, is in Jordanian custody. The charge sheet accuses them of transporting and possessing explosive and plotting subversive acts. Court-appointed attorney Yousef Udwan will represent Fuheiki, who the prosecution says studied at a Saudi university where he met several people who embraced takfiri ideology. According to the charges, Fuheiki and some other men infiltrated into Iraq from the Saudi border. In Iraq, they allegedly met Abu Odeh and others who encouraged them to join the "resistance." The group trained on several weapons and were indoctrinated in jihad and martyrdom. "Abu Odeh informed Fuheiki that suicide attacks were the best jihad method and the defendant decided to join the suicide attackers' team," the charge sheet added. Prosecutors alleged that the group decided to target oil tankers and other trucks crossing at Karameh, and that Zarqawi instructed the men to launch suicide attacks using cars laden with explosives. Accordingly, Fuheiki reportedly crossed the border in a car laden with explosives on December 3, 2004 with the intention of exploding next to several tankers. "Technical problems" prevented him from completing his mission and he was arrested shortly afterwards by authorities who discovered the explosives while searching his car, according to the charge sheet.

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PLOTS AGAINST AQABA, LIQUOR STORES  
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10. (U) The State Security Court in May opened the trial of four men accused of plotting to attack tourists in the Red Sea port town of Aqaba, as well as liquor stores in Amman. The prosecution says the four planned to travel to Iraq to join the insurgency in December 2004, but later changed their minds due to the "bad situation" there. Instead they opted in January 2005 to target foreigners in Aqaba and liquor stores in Amman and obtained a machine-gun and pistols. The men allegedly approached two liquor stores on January 2 with the intention of tying up the stores' owners, threatening them with weapons and destroying their shops, but aborted their plan due to security in the area. As they approached a third store, the men were arrested by a security patrol that was suspicious of their motives.

11. (U) In a separate trial, a 26-year-old Jordanian, Mohammad Yassin, pleaded not guilty on June 1 to charges that he attempted to blow up an Aqaba police station. The charge sheet says that Yassin went to the station on January 5 and shouted, "By God I will launch a suicide attack. I will bomb this place." Prosecutors claim that he then went to a nearby shop, took a gas cylinder and returned to the police station. After climbing over a wall to the officers' living quarters, he set the cylinder on fire and fled. It was extinguished before it exploded, however. The charge sheet did not give any reason behind Yassin's motives, according to press reports.

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TWO INDICTED FOR PLOTTING AGAINST ISRAELIS  
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12. (U) Two Jordanians pleaded not guilty in May to charges that they had plotted subversive acts against Israelis they believed were present at al-Hassan Industrial Estate. According to the prosecution, the two 27-year-old defendants, and a third being tried in absentia, formed a "jihad group" and decided to collect money to buy machine guns for their plans. They were arrested in February 2005 before carrying out any of their alleged attacks.

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